



## Urban Witchcraft



232 24 28

### Chapter 1 by Rowan Byrne

The apartment building is on the outskirts of town, it is grey and dirty and covered in weeds – it's perfect for him. Mars can feel power throbbing in the air around him, the twitching ground beneath his feet just bursting with untapped potential. For a normal person this place is ridiculous, the disasters and the dark, hot aura that covered it scaring them off.

For a Witch?

It was perfect.

Mars sighed loudly and stretched, letting his cases float to the ground behind him and calling one of his Nana's books close. Though old and worn they were full of hidden gems, secrets of magic that no commercial text he'd read could come close to. It was this book in particular that had led him to these apartments and their waves of natural power, her leyline maps tracking across the city and beyond, detailing both old and new sources of Magick.

Magick. Mars savored the word in his mouth, before sighing lightly, glancing up at the almost empty building - apparently an older gentleman lived in the basement but the rest was bare, after all, who wanted to live in a place like this, with it's broken tiles and rattling windows? The little ginger shook his head, it was an easy fix for a Witch! Especially a modern Witch who had all the flavours of the internet at hand.

Chapter 2 by R

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Okay, maybe it wasn't so  
up on the internet' was 'N  
anything it almost looked worse.

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of magic, after 'Look it  
I look any better, if

Mars sighed. His classmates were all successful already. He wasn't big on tradition, but he'd been following some traditional stuff: abandoned house, open to help with the locals, he'd even checked to make sure there wasn't a witch in the area already.

At this lonesome edge of the city, there was only some ghosts and probably some people of vague, magical descent. The spell hadn't worked out as planned. This should have been perfect. Instead, it was a mess. No one would come seeking advice from this ratty place, he was certain.

He started with the basics. Breathe in, breathe out, pull up that list you have bookmarked of all the basic, easy, helpful spells for living on your own. It might take a bit to work out how to make the place look magical enough, but he could handle with making it livable.

Sealants on the windows, and the doors, and the cracks to keep the heat in. Cover all the walls in sigils for protection from evil, and also from water damage. Breathe in, breathe out, fix the lightbulb. Breathe in, breathe out, unroll some of the carpets you did manage to pack, all the cool looking cheap ones that make the place look like a circus.

Mars stared over the front room, vaguely proud of himself. The windows were still cracked, and there was something green oozing down, and he could feel the broken tiles under the carpets, and oh, was that a cockroach - but none of that mattered. He was in business.

Now, to wait for the first customer. Or for his sister to call. Whichever came first.

### Chapter 3 by Rowan Byrne



At least it was spacious, there was room enough for an altar - when he got a table - and for his books - when he got some bookcases - and he was a Witch! A powerful one at that, even if he wasn't as trained or controlled with his Magick as some of his classmates but he could break curses they couldn't touch and if finesse didn't work he always had brute force. It was thoughts like this that made him realise how apt his name was.

Mars. God of War. Born under the red planet. Powerful

Truthfully he had not desire for v See more of Story Wars ridiculous but his Magick had always been fire and destr

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One hot cup of herbal tea later, and thank the gods he'd bought a kettle with him, the young man settled into the one chair he'd managed to salvage from the scrap heap and bring along with him, making a note to buy some cushions and a throw to cover it with. Mold stains were harder to get rid of than he'd anticipated.

As run down as the area he'd come across was there was still that throbbing line of Magick beneath his feet and if he could help people who needed help then he was doing his job right. Witches weren't all bad, in fact most Witches weren't.

Though, you still got the odd few. This was thought with a fond, if stressed smile, his sister Heava coming to mind. Powerful Magick ran in the family it seemed but his elder sibling seemed to want to go down a different path to himself.

Well, not to dwell on that. He shook his head, watching the door curiously, though Mars wasn't expecting a customer already.

#### Chapter 4 by R



Then, with a start, the door opened.

Magical Intuition had never been Mars's strong point, but occasionally it would work just right. He stood up to greet the person who walked in -

Only to see a familiar face standing in the doorway.

"Mars." She said, eyes widened in surprise. "I didn't realize you were even in the city. Is this-"

"My shop? Yes." He replied, deliberately not looking at her.

Akada duPoint stood there awkwardly. She had been more his sister's friend than his, but that didn't change the fact that her sudden death had hurt him deeply. And this was ...

"I need your help. You're a witch, still, right?" Akada asked, staring at him. She looked completely normal, which was the scariest part of them all, you would never have thought that she was, well, dead.

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"It's, well-" She started, but it was obvious she was nervous. "I just want to know, are you certain that this is a safe place to talk? Nowhere for someone to listen in?"

Mars quickly cast the spell, letting her watch as the barrier surrounded us. He couldn't make it bigger than five feet across, but it would be good enough for the two of us to stand in.

"That should block out anyone who's trying something like that." He announced. "What's wrong? It'd take a lot to frighten you this much."

"Well, you see..."

### Chapter 5 by Laura Frost



"It's not a problem, exactly. But it is illegal." She studied the spell, peering at it, studying the waves of the magic.

"What are you talking about? Illegal?" Mars crossed his arms. "What have you gotten yourself into?"

"It's nothing bad, I promise. It's called Street Magic. You've heard of it, right?"

Street Magic. He'd seen some of it before. Beautiful, crazy spells, created with almost no rhyme or reason. Existing for the sake of existing. Art in it's own form, it's own space. Created by those who lived outside of the Grand Coven's rules, almost acting as Covens of their own.

Completely illegal.

Mars had always wanted to know more.

"I knew you'd be interested." She had always been able to read him like a book. "If you want to know more, come to this address at ten tonight." She left him there, with a scrap of paper in his hands and a million questions in his head.

Street Magic. Found in the dark alleys of cities, on sidewalks, on buildings. If you looked, really looked, it was everywhere. Sometimes they were supposed to be put together.

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Sometimes they were supposed to be put together.

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Everything Mars had learned about magic was all rules and absolutes. Draw it like this. Use only this. Don't use more, don't use less.

Don't color outside of the lines.

Don't let creativity in.

Don't break the rules. Or else.

Street Magic. It's own special kind of Witchcraft.

He wanted to know more.

## Chapter 6 by Abyss



The rest of the day passed by uneventfully. No one really entered his shop. Who would? The apartment did look like a mess on the outside, after all. Besides, witchcraft was not a very popular trend in the modern age of technology.

Closing time approached, and he "locked" his shop up. It was almost 7pm by the time he was done. The old man was nowhere to be seen, and Mars wanted to keep it that way.

He stepped out his shop and looked around. The skyscrapers of the city cast its shadows upon him, just as a chill ran down his spine. He made a mental note to try masking the malevolent aura of the apartment. It would drive away any customers. Right now, though, dinner was in order.

Mars arrived at the city, walking down the bustling streets. The sun was setting rapidly, and the streets were thinninh as he walked on. His favourite Chinese restaurant was still quite a distance away.

Mars glanced at the alleyway he passed by. It would offer a shortcut, but held its dangers. But to hell with it, Mars thought. He was a Witch, after all. A few hexes and incantations, and any foe would bow to his will! He hoped it wouldn't come to that, though.

He trudged down the dark, stinky alley, hands in the pockets of his jeans. Chills began to run down his spine. Odd. According to the map of his grandma. this area of the city was

exceptionally unimportant.

Street Magic.

He glanced around warily.

defeat him. The small pud

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witch was going to

reflections. Upon

closer inspection, Mars realised the puddles were not reflecting. They were showing something else entirely.

Having enough, Mars pulled out his ritual knife and cut his arm. Blood dripped onto the ground.

"By the power of the Seventh Greater Spirit Of The Fourteenth Legion, I invoke the power of The Divine Banishing! May reality turn back once more to face me, and may this illusion be shattered under the spirit point of the Lesser Variant Of The Twenty First Pentagram!"

He felt magic flow out of him... and nothing happened. Odd. Mars glanced around, hoping to notice something different. Suddenly, realisation dawned on him.

The Divine Banishing was ritual specific. However, Street Magic blended spells together and weaved complex webs and layers of many rituals. As such, it was entirely possible that the Divine Banishing shattered only one of multiple rituals involved... or none at all. In the case of the latter, it would mean the Divine Banishing would backfire. Badly.

Suddenly, the alley seemed to darken. Shadowy phantoms with crimson red eyes congealed into existence, tearing from the shadows which suddenly began to dance even when the lamplights were not flickering. "Soul... life... repent... evil..." Whispers of the damned swirled around Mars. He sighed in frustration. How was he going to deal with one... two... three... SEVEN phantoms?! Mars widened his eyes in surprise. This was not normal! Perhaps it was an effect of Street Magic? Whatever it was, he needed to deal with the phantoms swiftly before they seized his soul.

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